



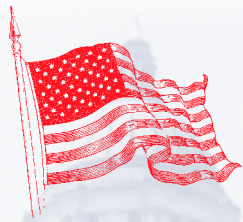
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I am deeply sorrowed by our nation's losses stemming from the cowardly terrorist acts of September 11, 2001. Now is the time to unite and join together like never before — and to resume the business of our daily lives to show those responsible that they will never break our spirit or our resolve. With that in mind, I have prepared for you this brief report about our work in Olympia. God bless America.

Representative Dan Roach



31st District Legislative Review

October 2001

Dear Friends,

It has been an honor to serve as your state representative in Olympia. Looking back, it seems like an eternity since we first convened back in January. But in that time, I worked hard to see that your concerns were addressed in the Legislature — and our voices were indeed heard.

This year, it seems like we experienced just about every challenge imaginable: another session with a 49-49 tie between Republicans and Democrats in the House; the Nisqually earthquake that left us all a little rattled; a state-wide drought and energy crisis; and three special legislative sessions to address the budget, transportation, tax relief for our struggling farmers and other critical issues.

Though many seem intent on focusing on what wasn't accomplished this year, it's important to note the many areas where important progress was made. While there is certainly much left to do next year, much was indeed accomplished for families and individuals throughout the 31st District.

Please take a moment to read through this brief report on the issues your legislature addressed this year. My thanks to all of you who took the time to write, call and e-mail me your concerns, advice and questions throughout the year — the more I hear from you, the louder your voice is heard in Olympia!

Sincerely,

Dan Roach
Your State Representative

Representative Dan Roach



EDUCATION & SCHOOLS REPORT

Improving schools so every child can succeed!

During the 1999-2001 budget cycle, our state government spent more than \$10 billion (about 46 percent of the General Fund budget) on public schools serving students from Kindergarten through the 12th Grade.

But are we really seeing a solid return on our investment?

Consider this: only one-third of our state's 10th graders are passing their math requirements and just 41 percent are meeting their writing requirements. Furthermore, nearly 12 percent of our state's 18-24 year-olds have failed to earn a high school diploma. We can and must do better!

In our ongoing effort to improve our public schools and provide the best opportunity for our children to learn, we adopted legislation that will help us attract and retain the most qualified teachers to the classroom.

Legislative Summary

Among the bills I supported this session is a measure that will make it easier for successful professionals to transition from the private sector to the teaching profession. This will enhance the learning experience for students by offering expertise from qualified individuals who have successful real-world experience.

We also have increased the number of hours retired teachers can continue to work without a reduction in pension benefits. This will allow our schools to continue calling upon our most experienced teachers for part-time or substitute work.

TRANSPORTATION UPDATE

I'll work to protect your voice in tax decisions!

The third and final special session ended without an agreement between lawmakers in the House and Senate on how to best solve our state's growing transportation crisis. While we all agreed that improving roads and reducing traffic congestion are key to promoting our state's economy and protecting our quality of life, there were nearly as many ideas about how we should address the problem as there are lawmakers in the Legislature.

The real problem – one that hasn't gotten the attention it deserves – is how to fund needed transportation improvements. Almost immediately, the governor and lawmakers from all sides focused their attentions on variations of the tax increases I mentioned above.

But do we really need to be raising taxes again?

Consider this:

Over the next ten years, accounting for inflation, Washington will collect more than \$300 billion in tax revenues. During that same time, the governor has proposed spending an additional \$10 billion on transportation projects. Instead of raising another \$10 billion in taxes, however, we could dedicate that same amount or more to transportation over the same time by helping state government save just \$1 out of every \$30 it would have raised and spent anyway.



Keeping Washington moving is important for every citizen, family and business.

If you had \$30 in your wallet and a friend asked to borrow \$1, you'd probably loan them the money because, after all, it's just a dollar. Imagine how much we could save if state government started prioritizing its budgets like our families do. The fact that the governor's first and only solution to our transportation woes is to raise your taxes shows just how out-of-control the system has really gotten.

Reducing traffic and improving road safety are important to our state's economic future, and to protecting our quality of life. However, I'm not convinced that tax increases are the only answer, and I'll continue working with lawmakers from both parties to ensure the plan we eventually adopt is truly in the best interests of our state.

31st District Legislative Review

STATE BUDGET UPDATE

Operating budget: A recipe for tax hikes

This year, I worked for months to craft a “reality budget.” The collection of tax revenues was slowing due to our cooling economy, health care and energy costs were rising substantially, state employees were demanding higher pay raises, and we had a drought and an earthquake to deal with.

I called it a “reality budget,” the reality being that we simply didn’t have the money to meet all the demands. We were going to have to set priorities and make decisions about where to direct our limited resources, just like families must do when planning their household budgets.

But in the end, what we ended up with is a “fantasy budget,” which **I did not support**. It fails to reflect any of the difficult decisions that we agreed must be made.

The budget ultimately signed into law spends substantially more than we can afford. Under any foreseeable scenario it will eventually require tax increases, severe or debilitating budget cuts to existing services, or both.

The budget spends \$667 million more than expected revenue. It is a tax increase by design, and unfortunately, it has become quite predictable.

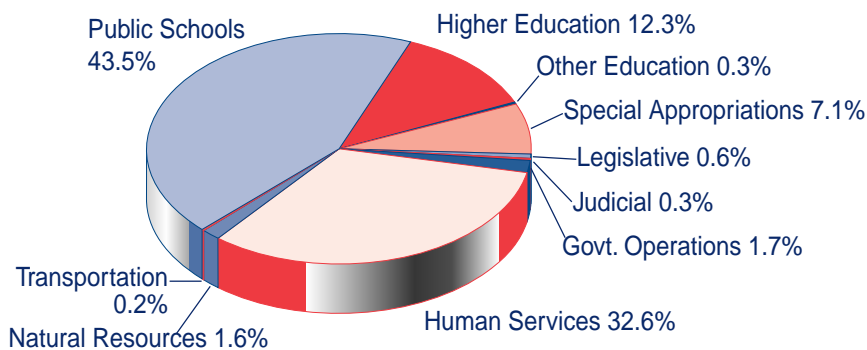
In the early 1980s the Legislature engaged in this kind of shortsighted budgeting and ran out of money. Things became so bad that lawmakers imposed a sales tax on our food. Again in the early '90s, the Legislature spent more than it could sustain, and wound up passing the largest tax increase in state history.

This tax-and-spend approach does a disservice to the taxpayers, as well as those who truly need government assistance, because it puts important programs in jeopardy. Eventually lawmakers will have to raise taxes or cut programs. With the budget we have, those will be our only choices.



Gov. Locke signs legislation sponsored by Dan Roach to protect the jobs of Washington's volunteer firefighters.

Where Your State Tax Dollars Are Spent



General Fund - State

Legislative	133,124
Judicial	71,679
Governmental Operations	392,904
Human Services	7,418,349
Natural Resources	355,477
Transportation	40,722
Public Schools	9,903,086
Higher Education	2,800,460
Other Education	59,988
Special Appropriations	1,610,994

Statewide Total \$22,786,783

Projected revenue \$22,105,600

Difference \$681 million

Representative Dan Roach



31ST DISTRICT STUDENT METH ADVISORY BOARD

According to a 1999 study, more than 11 percent of high school seniors in Washington reported trying the drug methamphetamine (also called meth, crystal meth, speed and crank). In fact, nearly 6,000 people in our state were admitted last year into treatment programs to combat this terribly dangerous, viciously addictive drug. Alarming, its popularity is reaching epidemic proportions.

It is my strong belief that we can learn just as much from students about new ways to curtail drug use as we can from researchers and counselors about the dangers and effects of drugs.

Accordingly, I am forming a new advisory board composed of students from high schools in the 31st District to help me develop a proposal to sponsor in the House that will bring a fresh new perspective to combating the meth epidemic in our schools.

To join the 31st District Student Meth Advisory Board, or to receive more information, high school students (freshmen through seniors) or their parents should contact me in Olympia at (360) 786-7846, toll free at (800) 562-6000, or via e-mail at roach_da@leg.wa.gov.

All I ask is that students who elect to participate in the panel possess an interest in helping develop new solutions to our growing meth crisis. There are no costs or fees (students under 18 years of age will need a parent's permission).

ECONOMIC UPDATE

Protecting jobs and our economy

The state revenue forecast released in September shows less money than expected coming into the state's general fund, increasing the likelihood of tax increases or budget cuts in the coming year. Lawmakers knew back in June, when the state budget was passed, there was a good chance state revenues would decline. That's why I argued so strongly for using greater spending discipline and leaving larger reserves in the general fund.

Now more than ever, we need to focus our efforts on invigorating our economy, protecting existing jobs, and attracting new family-wage jobs to Washington and the South Puget Sound region. As our state and our nation unite in the wake of the terrible and tragic events of Sept. 11, it is the Legislature's responsibility to do everything in its power to put the needs of Washington citizens, families and businesses first. That is my pledge to you as we continue working to develop and implement common-sense solutions to our state's economic and budgetary challenges.

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD IN OLYMPIA!

Your views are important to me! Much of what I do in the House is based on the advice and views you have shared with me.

If you have questions or concerns regarding legislative issues, please contact my office in Olympia. I can also help you if you are having problems in your dealings with state government.

It is a privilege to serve you as your state representative. Please continue to call, write or send e-mails on any issue that's important to you!

31st
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Legislative
Review

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Dan Roach
Representative

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